

Queen's College, Taunton

Education policies

Pupil Complaints Procedure



Scope

This policy is applicable to the whole college.

Policy statement

Queen's College is a caring, Christian family community and is committed to supporting and encouraging each individual. The College encourages pupils to seek support and guidance from a variety of people within the College starting with their tutor but extending to a whole range of people available to support them. These include the Headmaster, Houseparents, Deputy Head, Assistant Head Pastoral, the Chaplain, School doctors and Medical Centre staff. Pupils are free to seek help from any of the many members of the community who are willing and able to give assistance. There is also a named person outside of the College system willing and able to be contacted by phone to listen to pupils. In addition phone numbers of external organisations who can offer help are published.

Issues involving Child Protection will be referred to the Child Protection Officer immediately.

In circumstances where a complaint arises a similar system will operate. Complaints from pupils will be treated as important and serious and should follow the procedure outlined below. Clearly much will depend on the nature and severity of the complaint.

Complaints from Pupils

Stage 1 – initial actions

It is hoped that most concerns and complaints will be resolved quickly and informally.

Complaints by pupils about other pupils

Pupils' concerns and complaints will be listened to carefully. It is up to the individual Houseparent and Tutor just how seriously to take each complaint. Houseparents and Tutors know their pupils well and will know how to respond. It is important to record some of the more serious areas of concern and their outcomes.

A happy balance should be found between responding to every complaint and every little niggle that a pupil has and turning a blind eye or failing to act on issues that would benefit from staff or other adult intervention.

Complaints by pupils about staff

This can be difficult for Tutors and Houseparents because they often feel loyalty towards their colleagues and also need to support the pupils within their care. However, in today's society it is important that pupils feel that they can turn to and talk to their Houseparent or Tutor.

Procedure

If a pupil has a complaint they should normally in the first instance talk to their Tutor. Often the Houseparent will be involved at this stage. It may be advantageous in appropriate cases to hold a preliminary meeting with the Chaplain. If the Tutor or Houseparent cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary to consult another senior member of staff (for example the Chaplain, Assistant Head Pastoral, Deputy Head or Headmaster).

Complaints made directly to the Deputy Head, the Assistant Head (Pastoral) or Headmaster will usually be referred to the relevant Tutor or Houseparent unless they deem it appropriate to deal with the matter personally.

In more serious cases, the Tutor or Houseparent will keep written records of all meetings, interviews and telephone conversations held in relation to the complaint and the action(s) taken to resolve it. Should the matter not be resolved within 7 days or in the event that that Tutor or Houseparent and the pupil fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, the complaint will be referred to the Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster.

Stage 1 – Pupils referred to the Headmaster for informal resolution as per above

The Headmaster will meet with or speak to the pupil/s concerned as soon as possible after receiving the complaint in order to discuss the matter. The pupil should have a friend or their Tutor with them. If possible, a resolution will be reached at



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this stage. It may be necessary for the Headmaster to carry out further investigations. If an informed resolution of the situation cannot be made at this stage, it is likely that the parents of the pupil/s will become involved.

The Headmaster will keep written records of all meetings, interviews and telephone conversations held in relation to the complaint.

Once the Headmaster is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and pupil/s and parents will be informed of this decision in writing with clear reasons for that decision.

If the pupil/s and parents are still not satisfied with the decision, they may lodge an appeal to the Governors. In this instance, refer to Stage 3 of the Parent Complaints Procedure.

Document control

Revision number	2.0	Written by	Deputy Headmaster
Last approved by the Board of Governors	25 November 2010		
Date for next review	November 2013		